



Public Policy Making and Implementation: Implications on Education Policy in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines public policy making and implementation and its implications on education policy in Nigeria. Public policy making and implementation is a critical process which shapes the development trajectory of any Nation be it a democratic or an authoritarian state. In Nigeria, the formulation and implementation of education policy are profoundly influenced by several factors some of which are political, economic, and socio-cultural. The paper explores how policy decisions are initiated, negotiated, and enacted within the broader context of governance structure, stakeholder engagement, and bureaucratic processes. The methodology adopted for this study is descriptive base on content analysis. The advocacy coalition framework theory formulated by Sabatier and Jenkins 1988 and Jenkins-Smith, Nourstedt, Weible and Ingold 2018 was used to support arguments presented in this study. Findings reveals key challenges such as inadequate funding, policy inconsistencies, weak institutional capacity, and political interference all of which hinder effective

implementation of education policies. Additionally, funding gaps constitute a fundamental barrier to effective education policy implementation in Nigeria. Additionally, policy formulation is often strongly influenced by political cycles, elite bargaining, and short-term optics rather than by long-term technical planning. Part of the recommendation proffered is that Public Policy making and implementation must be all encompassing involving relevant stakeholders in the education sector in Nigeria and confirm to global best practice.

Keywords: Education, Education Policy, Implementation, Public, Policy, Policy Making

1.1 Introduction

Public policy serves as a vital instrument through which government address societal challenges, distribute resources, and promote national development. Public policy making has consistently been a Top-Down approach, and highly politically driven with less relevant stakeholders' participation which most often leads to misalignment between policy objectives and implementation realities (Ikeanibe, 2016). Ayo, (2020) averred that public policy implementation is frequently hindered by institutional weakness, corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, and general

lack of continuity across political administration. These factors contributed to the widening gap between policy intentions and actual outcomes in the education sector in Nigeria.

Public policy refers to a deliberate course of action, decision, or set of decisions adopted by government institutions to address societal problems, achieve specific goals, or regulate public affairs. It encompasses laws, regulations, programs, and actions formulated by public authorities to guide governance and allocate resources in response to public needs. According to Thomas Dye (2017), public policy is “whatever governments choose to do or not to do,” emphasizing that government inaction can be as significant as action in shaping societal outcomes. This definition highlights the authoritative nature of policy and the role of government in determining priorities. Similarly, James E. Anderson (2015) conceptualizes public policy as a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. This perspective stresses intentionality, goal orientation, and the systematic character of policy decisions. Public policy,

therefore, is not random governmental activity but a structured response to public issues. It often emerges through a process involving agenda setting, policy formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation.

From a broader governance perspective, William Jenkins (1978) views public policy as a set of interrelated decisions made by political actors concerning goals and means within a specified situation. This suggests that policy consists not only of objectives but also the strategies designed to achieve them. In this sense, public policy is both a product and a process, involving interactions among government institutions, stakeholders, and societal interests. Public policy implementation, on the other hand, refers to the stage in the policy process where adopted policies are translated into action through programs, administrative activities, and operational procedures. It is the process by which governmental intentions are converted into practical outcomes. According to Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983), policy implementation involves carrying out a basic policy decision through administrative and political processes directed



toward achieving stated objectives. This underscores implementation as the operationalization of policy.

Likewise, Jeffrey Pressman and Aaron Wildavsky (1973) argue that implementation is fundamentally about interaction, coordination, and the capacity of institutions to execute decisions. They emphasize that implementation often encounters obstacles such as bureaucratic inefficiency, inadequate funding, weak institutional capacity, and conflicting interests, which may hinder policy success. While public policy represents what government intends to do, public policy implementation concerns how those intentions are carried out. Effective implementation determines whether policy goals are realized, making it a critical component of governance and public administration (Hill & Hupe, 2022). According to World Bank (2020) education which is a critical sector and plays a critical role in fostering human capital development, promote economic growth, enhance social transformation is affected by public policy in Nigeria. Successive governments have introduced numerous education policies aimed at

improving access, quality and equity in education. However, the sector continues to suffer systemic issues such as poor infrastructure, poor learning outcomes, funding challenges and wide regional disparities (UNESCO, 2022).

According to federal ministry of education (2018) the implications of the challenges in the education sector are very profound. Policies such as the UBE schemes, which was design to provide free and compulsory education to Nigeria Children, have struggled to achieve its goals due to poor implementation framework and insufficient resource allocation (funding), and this funding gap results in high number of out-of-school children, low enrollments in rural and disadvantaged education areas in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2021). This paper seeks therefore to critically examine the processes of public policy making and implementation in Nigeria and its implications on education policy using the advocacy coalition theoretical framework to explore how institutional, political, socio-economic factors shape education policy outcomes in Nigeria. The paper hope to contribute to the onerous discuss on education reforms by

identifying key issues and gaps in policy processes and recommending strategies for a more robust, effective and inclusive policy implementation in the education sector in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite the formulation of comprehensive education policy such as the Universal basic Education (UBE) programme and the National Policy on Education (NPE), Nigeria continues to face daunting and persistent challenges in achieving equitable, accessible and quality basic education. There is a continued disconnect between policy making and effective implementation, poor coordination across federal, States and local governments, limited institutional capacity, political interference and inadequate stakeholders' engagements have resulted in policy failures. This has also resulted in the armies of out-of-school Children, poor education standard and wide disparities between states, raising the question on the effectiveness of Nigeria's policy and governance framework in providing good and quality education in Nigeria.

1.3 Objective of the study

1. To examine how public policy making and implementation processes impact on education policy in Nigeria.
2. To evaluate funding gap and its impact on effective policy implementation in education sector in Nigeria.

1.4 Study questions

1. How do Public Policy making and implementation processes influence education policy in Nigeria?
2. How does Funding Gap impact on effective policy implementation in education sector in Nigeria?

1.5 Conceptual Clarification

1.5.1 Policy

Examining the etymology of the word “policy,” Dunn (2008) made the following analysis: The word “policy” emerges from the Greek “polis” (citystate), the ancient Sanskrit “pur” (city), and the Latin “politia” (state) words. These words eventually evolved from the medieval English word “policie” meaning “actualization of public activities” or

“administration of government.” Birkland (2011:8) argues that “a policy can be a set of legal regulations governing a particular problem area or problem”. The first of these is the usage in the sense of political science/public administration. The second one is used in terms of purpose and how to handle a job policy in specific sector like Security policy, education policy, agriculture policy, fiscal policy etc. (Altınok&Gedikkaya, 2016).

The concept of policy occupies a central place in public administration, political science, and development studies. Dye, (2017) sees policy as a deliberate course of action or inaction adopted by an authority to address a defined problem or achieve specific goals within a society. In public administration and governance, policies serve as a framework that guides decision-making, resource allocation, and implementation activities across sectors such as education, health, security, and the economy. The above definition underscores two key ideas: first, that policy involves intentional choices made by those in authority; and second, that government inaction can be as consequential as action. Similarly,

Anderson (2015) defines public policy as a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern. This highlights the goal-oriented nature of policy and the involvement of multiple actors in its formulation and execution.

Policies are typically expressed through official instruments such as laws, regulations, plans, programmes, and guidelines. However, scholars emphasize that policy is not limited to written documents; it also encompasses the values, priorities, and political considerations that shape governmental responses to societal issues (Howlett, Ramesh, & Perl, 2020). From this perspective, policy reflects the interaction between political authority, institutional capacity, and societal demands. In practice, policy is commonly analyzed as a process rather than a single decision. This process includes agenda setting, formulation, adoption, implementation, and evaluation (Easton, 1965; Howlett et al., 2020). Understanding policy as a process helps explain why well-designed policies may still fail to achieve desired outcomes if implementation

mechanisms are weak or if contextual factors are ignored.

1.5.2 Public Policy

The most well-known definition of public policy is the definition of “everything that governments choose to do or not do” made by Dye (2017).

With this definition, Dye has not limited the scope of public policy to the actions taken by the public, but has also included the things that the public does not prefer to do, into the public policy. Even this inactive state of government has a huge impact on society. While the government’s inaction on any issue may positively affect one part of society, it may negatively affect another. In another vain, Kraft and Furlong (2018: p38), averred that “public policy is a series of actions or inactions that governments develop in response to public problems”. To Manjo, (2024) Public Policy is a course of action adopted by the government of a nation. It is often referred to as the laws, regulations, administrative guidelines, procedures and funding criteria established by government. This definition implies that public policies are generated by the power of the

political actors. Public policy also encompasses official policy objectives, policy instruments, the actions of policy actors, and the actual behavior of these actors.

1.5.3 Public Policy Making

Public policy making is the systematic process through which governments identify societal problems and then choose goal-directed actions, often in the form of laws, regulations, or programs, to address them. The process typically involves stages such as identifying a problem, setting it on the public agenda, formulating and adopting potential solutions, implementing the chosen policy, and finally evaluating its effectiveness. To Manjo, (2024), Public policy making process comprises a large and diverse number of actors and institutions, government and non-governmental entities, as well as a wide range of policy instruments. There are interactions among these actors and institutions during public policy making process as they attempt to influence the debate, selection and eventual implementation of various policy instruments. Public policy making process is conducted in sequential order, stages and in a cycle, involving actors and

institutions, beginning with the identification of a given problem. This is followed by public and government awareness of the problem, known as policy demand, which leads to the development of various causes of actions to solve the given problem, known as policy formulation. Manjo, (2024:p3), further averred that “this is followed by government adoption and legitimization of a given action which results to the implementation of the action, and subsequently leads to policy evaluation in order to determine if the objectives of the action are being achieved, and finally, the cycle comes full circle when new problems are identified resulting to policy modification, revision or termination”. There are stages in public policy making, the under listed therefore suffice;

- i. Problem Identification: Recognizing and defining a societal issue that requires government intervention.
- ii. Agenda Setting: Bringing the identified problem to the attention of policymakers and the public, making it a priority for action.

- iii. Policy Formulation: Developing potential solutions and alternatives to address the problem, often involving extensive analysis and consideration of costs and outcomes.
- iv. Policy Adoption: The selection and formal approval of a specific policy option by government decision-makers.
- v. Policy Implementation: Putting the adopted policy into practice through government agencies and programs, which can include laws, regulations, or direct services?
- vi. Policy Evaluation: Assessing the effectiveness and impact of the implemented policy to determine if it successfully achieved its goals and to inform future policy decisions.

Each step is usually followed in the order listed to make sure that the process is followed accordingly. In many cases, these steps are turned into a cycle, with each step being repeated as changes occur, when a policy is evaluated (Manjo, 2024).

1.6 Public Policy Implementation

Public policy implementation is an important stage of the policy-making process. Onwuke and Monwuba (2025) said that Policy implementation is the process of carrying out or executing a policy decision, which involves putting the decision into effect through a series of administrative and operational steps. Implementation is a process of interaction between setting goals and the actions taken to achieve them. It means the execution of the law in which various stakeholders, organizations, procedures, and techniques work together to put policies into effect with a view to attaining policy goals (Stewart et al., 2008). Manjo, (2024) averred that implementation can be viewed as a process, an output and an outcome, and it involves a number of actors, organizations and techniques of control. It is the process of the interactions between setting goals and the actions directed towards achieving them (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1973).

1.6.1 Stages in Policy Implementation

There are five stages of policy implementation. These stages as follows;

- i. The policy decisions of ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs);
- ii. Compliance of the internal and external target groups with those decisions; the actual impact of the decisions;
- iii. The perceived impact of the decisions;
- iv. The political systems revision of the original policy. The first three stages address policy output while the last two stages address the political system's relationship to policy.

In all, the five stages usually reflect general tendencies in 'top-down' approach to policy implementation. A critical examination of the five stages of policy implementation reveals that implementation is not only a managerial or administrative problem; it is also a political process. It is concerned with who gets what, when, how, where and from whom (Manjo, 2024).

1.7 Education Policy

Educational policies are policies designed and formulated by the government for the administration and management of education in the local government, states and country.

Educational policy is the policies approved by the government for directing the affairs of education (Ogunode, & Samuel, 2020). Educational policy of Nigeria is a general statement containing principles, regulations and rules that govern many of the decisions, on how to educate the citizens. Policies are written or unwritten statements that guide present and future thinking, initiatives, actions and decisions of managers. Ogunode and Omotola (2024) averred that policies are written when there are documents somewhere for reference purposes and are unwritten when they are made in the form of mere pronouncements, i.e. policy statements by people in power or position of authority. Policies are guides that usually provide the latitude of operations of managers.

1.8 Literature Review

1.8.1 Policy-making and implementation processes and education policy outcomes in Nigeria

Nigeria's education policies ranging from the National Policy on Education and the 2004 Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act to recent programmatic initiatives are ambitious in scope but recurrently falter in producing expected outcomes (access, learning, equity, and system

resilience). A dominant explanation in the literature is that weaknesses in the policy-making and implementation chain political incentives, intergovernmental fiscal relations, institutional capacity, and governance of the implementation process shape whether policy designs translate into measurable education results (World Bank, 2025). Ezegwu, (2023), is of the view that policy formulation in Nigeria is often strongly influenced by political cycles, elite bargaining, and short-term optics rather than by long-term technical planning. Political turnover and shifting priorities produce frequent policy revisions, partial reforms, and limited continuity reducing the chances that multi-year education reforms will reach implementation maturity.

The literature also highlights design weaknesses that constrain implementation. Policies that are overly centralized, vaguely costed, or lacking clear assignment of responsibilities to implementing agencies create implementation ambiguity at state and local levels (Bolaji, 2016; UBEC Act, 2004). When responsibilities are not matched with resources or authority for example, expecting states to deliver



UBE targets without guaranteed counterpart financing policies remain aspirational rather than actionable. Policy implementation processes in Nigeria highlights institutional capacity gaps at ministries, UBEC, state ministries of education and local education authorities. Capacity constraints include weak planning and budgeting skills, limited monitoring and data systems, and poor procurement and human resource management factors that blunt policy translation into classroom changes (Bolaji, 2016; Ogbiji, 2016). Fragmentation of implementation responsibility multiple agencies with overlapping roles further reduces policy coherence. Where national agencies produce guidelines but lack enforcement levers (or where multiple donors and projects create parallel systems), local actors struggle to prioritize actions, and monitoring becomes inconsistent, reducing accountability for outcomes (RISE Programme, 2023). Predictability of funding and clarity of implementation modalities are repeatedly associated with better outcomes. Studies show that unpredictable disbursements (late or partial funds) force schools and state agencies into ad-

hoc management, stall planned capital projects, and interrupt teacher training or learning interventions (Luka, 2024; UBEC program documents). Conversely, jurisdictions that publish timely budget and school census data and decentralize grant management evidence higher rates of on-time implementation.

Transparency and data systems also matter. The literature documents that weak or absent annual school censuses, limited public reporting of grants and procurement, and poor digital financial management create opportunities for leakage and reduce the ability of policymakers to track implementation fidelity (World Bank, 2024 HOPE reports). Strengthening routine data, public reporting and community oversight emerges as a recurring recommendation to improve the implementation outcome link (World Bank, 2024). Empirical reviews stress political will and policy champions as decisive to successful implementation. Where state governors, education commissioners, or ministerial teams champion reforms and align incentives across agencies policy uptake and resourcing improve. Absent such champions,

reforms stall. Political interruptions (coups, abrupt leadership changes) and politicized appointments undermine continuity and technical autonomy, producing implementation vacuums. Historical analyses show that political instability in Nigeria has periodically weakened institutional memory and reform momentum in education (RISE Programme, 2023)

Donor and project financing play a large role in many programmes (especially for innovation, teacher development, and conflict-affected areas). While external financing can catalyze reforms, they also embody risks, when donor projects create parallel implementation channels or withdraw abruptly, local systems are left without sustainable financing or institutional ownership undermining policy outcomes once project funds end (Ogbiji, 2016; Luka, 2024). Building domestic financing strategies and integrating donor activities into government systems is therefore a critical implementation concern.

Ejere, (2011) and Bolaji, (2016) showed how a multiple case studies of UBE implementation and school-level evaluations

established how process failures translate into poor outcomes: schools with delayed grants, missing textbooks, or irregular teacher payments show lower enrollment, attendance and learning performance Macro-level reports (e.g., World Bank HOPE, 2024 analyses) corroborate these micro-findings and link systemic implementation weaknesses to slower progress on SDG-related education indicators nationally. While there is broad agreement that policy-making and implementation processes shape education outcomes, scholars identify several gaps. First, there is limited rigorous causal evidence that isolates which specific implementation reforms (e.g., fiscal decentralization, digital grants, and community scorecards) reliably improve learning outcomes at scale. Second, few longitudinal, subnational comparative studies trace how variations in implementation routines produce divergent state trajectories over time. Finally, more research is needed on how political economy reforms (e.g., changes to intergovernmental fiscal rules) can be operationalized without undermining local accountability. These gaps point to the need for mixed methods and

programmatic evaluations embedded in reform efforts.

1.8.2 Funding Gaps and Effective Policy Implementation in Nigeria's Education Sector

Adeyemi, (2011) and World Bank, (2020) opine that in Nigeria, successive governments have introduced numerous education policies aimed at expanding access, improving quality, promoting equity, and strengthening governance in the sector. Key policy frameworks include the National Policy on Education (NPE), the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme, and Education Sector Plans aligned with global agendas such as Education for All (EFA) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, despite these policy commitments, outcomes in terms of enrolment, learning achievement, infrastructure quality, and teacher effectiveness remain poor. A dominant theme in the literature is that inadequate and inefficient financing constitutes a major constraint to effective education policy implementation in Nigeria.

Education funding refers to the allocation, disbursement, and utilization of financial

resources for education service delivery, including infrastructure, teacher remuneration, learning materials, administration, and monitoring (UNESCO, 2015). Policy implementation, on the other hand, involves translating policy objectives into concrete actions and outcomes through administrative, financial, and institutional mechanisms (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984). According to Grindle (2017), even well-designed policies fail when financial resources are insufficient or poorly aligned with implementation responsibilities. In federal systems such as Nigeria's, funding challenges are compounded by multi-tier governance structures, fiscal disparities, and weak coordination among federal, state, and local governments (Adewuyi & Ibrahim, 2021). Nigeria's education sector is financed through a combination of federal, state, and local government budgetary allocations, supplemented by intervention funds, donor assistance, and household contributions. Key funding mechanisms include annual government budgets, the Universal Basic Education Intervention Fund (UBEIF), and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund).

However, multiple studies indicate that public expenditure on education in Nigeria remains consistently below international benchmarks, particularly UNESCO's recommendation of allocating 15–20% of national budgets to education (UNESCO, 2015; World Bank, 2024). Ojo and Yusuff (2019) note that Nigeria's education budgets are not only low in aggregate terms but also skewed toward recurrent expenditure, leaving limited resources for capital projects and instructional improvement. In addition, funding flows are often unpredictable and subject to delays, undermining planning and execution at the sub-national level. UBEC intervention funds, for example, require counterpart funding from states, which many fiscally constrained states struggle to provide, leading to underutilization of available resources (UBEC, 2018).

Nigeria has one of the highest populations of out-of-school children globally, with concentrations in northern and rural regions (UNICEF, 2022). World Bank (2020) estimates suggest that achieving universal basic education in Nigeria would require substantial increases in

public spending or major efficiency gains. Where funding shortfalls persist, states are unable to absorb growing school-age populations, resulting in overcrowded classrooms, informal learning arrangements, or complete exclusion from schooling. Thus, funding gaps directly weaken the capacity of education policies to translate universal access goals into reality. Beyond access, Ogunode and Musa, (2020) strongly associates inadequate funding with declining education quality and added that quality-enhancing inputs such as textbooks, instructional materials, teacher training, supervision, and assessment systems are often underfunded in Nigeria. As a result, policy reforms aimed at curriculum improvement or competency-based learning frequently fail at the implementation stage. Poor remuneration, irregular salary payments, and limited professional development opportunities reduce teacher motivation and effectiveness (Adedeji & Olaniyan, 2011). Funding gaps also affect class size, pupil/teacher ratios, and the maintenance of school facilities, all of which influence learning outcomes. World Bank, (2024) indicated that there is a correlation between inadequate funding

and low student achievement in standardized assessments. Equity is a central objective of Nigeria's education policies, yet funding gaps often exacerbate regional and socio-economic inequalities.

Adewuyi & Ibrahim, (2021) argue that Nigeria's education financing system does not adequately compensate for horizontal disparities among states and local governments. Wealthier states are better positioned to supplement federal transfers, while poorer and conflict-affected states remain trapped in cycles of underfunding and weak implementation. UNICEF, (2022) reported that gender disparities and the exclusion of vulnerable groups are also linked to funding constraints. Programs targeting girl-child education, special needs education, and internally displaced persons frequently depend on donor support, making them vulnerable to funding volatility. When donor funding declines or is withdrawn, policy initiatives collapse, reversing earlier gains and highlighting the fragility of externally financed interventions (UNICEF, 2022).

In Nigeria's decentralized education system, funding gaps also weaken institutional capacity at the state and local government levels. Local education authorities often lack the financial and technical resources required to implement national policies effectively, leading to uneven policy outcomes across the federation (Ojo & Yusuff, 2019). Scholars argue that improving funding adequacy must go hand-in-hand with reforms in budgeting, procurement, and financial reporting to strengthen implementation capacity. Overall, the literature converges on the conclusion that funding gaps constitute a fundamental barrier to effective education policy implementation in Nigeria. Inadequate funding affects access, quality, equity, and governance, thereby limiting the transformative potential of education policies. However, several gaps remain. First, many studies focus on aggregate spending levels without sufficiently examining expenditure efficiency and value for money. Second, there is limited empirical research linking specific funding mechanisms (such as UBE counterpart funding) to implementation outcomes at the school level. Third, more longitudinal and sub-

national analyses are needed to capture variations across states and over time.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

The advocacy coalition framework theory formulated by Sabatier and Jenkins 1988 and Jenkins-Smith, Nourstedt, Weible and Ingold 2018 was used to support arguments presented in this study. Sabatier and Jenkins (1988) argues that policy making is not a one-of decision but a continuous process influenced by coalitions of actors; who in this context are Bureaucrats, Politicians, civil society groups, interest groups, and international donors all involved in policy process. This means that policy outcome especially Universal Basic education, School feeding programme, funding allocation, curriculum reforms are often shaped by coalitions of federal ministries, teacher's union, NGOs and international bodies like UNICEF, and UNESCO.

Jenkings perspective on the other hand, emphasizes intentionality and decision-making aspect of public policy indicating that Nigerian education policies like school feeding programme, free basic Education emerge from deliberate governmental and political choices,

often influenced by contextual pressures. The advocacy coalition theory follows that education policy in Nigeria can be said to a deliberate government decisions to increase access, improve quality and align with global goals especially MDG goals 4.

The theory also explains why policy implementation often fails. It attributed this to competitions among various stakeholders creating tensions that slow or distort implementation. For example, the Universal Basic Education programme was well formulated, by Jenkins perspective, implementation faced resistance due to coalition struggles between state governments who are responsible for implementing the programme and relevant federal government agencies responsible for funding and teachers union who kept advocating for welfare).

1.10 Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design relying on secondary data to analyze the topic under study. Data were sourced from peer-reviewed journal articles, official reports, policy documents, and credible online data base.

Relevant materials were identified through systematic searches in reputable internet sources. The study focuses on publications published between 2015-2025, serve for materials that were deemed very relevant which addresses issues on public policy making and implementation in Nigeria. Validation of data was done through cross-referencing across multiple sources to ensure accuracy and consistency. Reliability was maintained through the use of peer reviewed materials and journal papers. Triangulation of materials was maintained through the inclusion of well research reports known for rigorous review processes.

1.11 Findings.

Studies show that policy formulation in Nigeria is often strongly influenced by political cycles, elite bargaining, and short-term optics rather than by long-term technical planning. Political turnover and shifting priorities produce frequent policy revisions, partial reforms, and limited continuity reducing the chances that multi-year education reforms will reach implementation maturity (Ezegwu, 2023; Okoroma, 2006). There is also design weaknesses that constrain effective

implementation. Policies that are overly centralized, vaguely costed, or lacking clear assignment of responsibilities to implementing agencies create implementation ambiguity at state and local levels (Bolaji, 2016; UBEC Act, 2004). The study reveals that in federal systems such as Nigeria's, funding challenges are compounded by multi-tier governance structures, fiscal disparities, and weak coordination among federal, state, and local governments (Adewuyi & Ibrahim, 2021). Nigeria's education sector is financed through a combination of federal, state, and local government budgetary allocations, supplemented by intervention funds, donor assistance, and household contributions. Key funding mechanisms include annual government budgets, the Universal Basic Education Intervention Fund (UBEIF), and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund).

1.12 Conclusion

Policy outcomes in Nigeria's education sector are not determined solely by what is written into laws or strategies, but by the processes of policy-making and implementation. Political incentives, fiscal arrangements, institutional



capacity, transparency, and stakeholder engagement together determine whether policies move from paper to practice. Addressing Nigeria's education challenges therefore requires reforms that strengthen implementation systems matching responsibilities with predictable resources, building sub-national capacity, improving data and accountability, and aligning donor support with domestic systems. Funding gaps undermine policy objectives by constraining access, lowering quality, deepening inequities, and weakening governance structures. Addressing these challenges requires not only increased public investment in education but also reforms to improve efficiency, accountability, and coordination across levels of government.

1.13 Recommendations

The following recommendations became necessary

1. Public policy making and implementation processes must confirm to global best practice in terms of identification, formulation, aggregation and implementation of education policy in Nigeria

2. Public policy implementation must be backed by adequate funding, effective and periodic monitoring and evaluation of policy implementation.

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